Jim Stipe, CRS, Madagascar 2019

Digital by Default

USAID has released its first-ever *Digital Strategy*, charting an Agency-wide vision for development and humanitarian assistance in the world's rapidly evolving digital landscape. It sets a path to equip staff, empower partners, and shape effective programming that supports partners to become self-reliant and capable of leading their own development journeys. The appropriate use of digital technology allows CRS to reap efficiency rewards in our programming, and digitally savvy staff can better protect the individuals with whom we work. As we transform our approach to benefit from the gains of doing development in a digital age, we must shift to a programmatic position that leverages digital technology responsibly by default. Shifting to a '**digital by default**' or 'digital first' paradigm means a shift away from favoring traditional channels to prioritizing digital ones. Understanding USAID's vision for a shift to digital by default helps to illuminate what this means in practice.

- USAID will integrate the **Principles for Digital Development** into the design, procurement, and implementation of their awards, as appropriate.

- USAID will mandate the digital collection of programmatic data.[1]

- USAID's contractors and recipients will adopt cybersecurity and data-privacy protective measures for their internal operations and implemented activities.

- USAID will make digital payments the default method of payment under all their awards.

Building on more than a decade of investment in ICT4D, CRS is well-positioned to meet the parameters set out in USAID's Digital Strategy. To learn more about ICT4D at CRS, click **here**!

For more information, view the USAID Digital Strategy.

---

1   USAID will make exceptions to this mandate on a case-by-case basis.